1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

THE SOUL—SPOOKS

775 [787] [821] The souls of the dead go south (Jack, Dave). But according to some Washo they remain near the living and listen to them. Some people dream of the dead, who appear as in life. Such a dreamer would report, "I saw So-and-so in a dream and talked with him." Whirlwinds are identified with the dead coming by; all the dead travel. When a person goes to sleep by himself and hears some noise striking the house, it is the ghost of a dead man; it makes a crack in the house and looks at the inmate. This was the belief of an old man, shared by some Washo and rejected by others. Dave, who quoted it, commented as follows: "He tells right, by God. I think he's right a little bit: dead people don't go anywhere, they stay right here. . . . . If there were any people alive in Heaven, maybe they'd make a rope and come down, but no one does that."

[551] A dead person's name should not be uttered. Whoever broke this rule was rebuked as follows: "He is dead, he is gone, don't call him!"

787 775 539 Some Indians see ghosts at night, that is, they see a good dress without a face and are frightened. Once, of a night, Jack's son, when about two miles from Reno, thought he heard some Paviotso singing and dancing. He saw women sitting on the ground, and asked why they were not joining in the dance. They did not answer. Then he inquired for the owner of a horse standing there. Still there was no answer. Then he struck a match, and the women were gone. He went up to pet the horse, and it was no longer there. Then he got frightened and quickly went to an Indian house.

[763] Once, in the old days, a Washo saw a strange figure hanging on the limb of a big tree struck by lightning. The apparition was thin to the bone, curly-haired, with big eyes and black face, wings, and legs with little feet, but no arms. The Indian went home. That night he began to tremble; after another day and a half he died. Then the other Indians were all afraid and did not want to look at that thing any more.

776 A species of evil water-beings was called mɛtsuy'ɛ'. The Washo were afraid to meet them. Once, when walking in the sand around Lake Tahoe, Dave saw the tracks of one. These beings would travel about a little, always along the shore, at night, then go back into the Lake again. They made the sound of babies at night; the Indians would hear them. They live in a house under the water, possibly twenty feet below the surface. Men and women both live there. They do not like Indians; the Washo avoid them and never dream of them. A Washo would be terrified, paralyzed "a little bit," bleed from the nose, and fall sick if he saw one of these beings. Judging from their tracks, their feet are only the length of a little baby's.

776 539 Once, a Washo was fishing in the Lake with a line and reel, when the line got caught at the bottom. He thought it was a snake, but it was a mɛtsuy'ɛ' pulling the line down. He was pretty strong. After a while he let go, and the line got slack. There was a tuft of hair on the point of the hook. The Indian was paralyzed and fell down unconscious in his boat for possibly an hour. There was no wind. At last he woke up terrified and made for home. He cut off the hook and line with the hair, and threw them back into the water. He told his wife and children about his experience. For a week after that the fish would not bite. All the Washo were afraid. About half a mile from shore there is a spring; that is where these water-beings probably come from. Their hair reaches down to the knee.

1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

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Once, an old Indian was walking along a trail by himself when he saw two persons coming toward him—a woman with a basket, and an old man with bow and arrow and carrying a blanket on his back. The Washo sat down under a pifion tree and was wondering who they were. He thought they would reach him soon, but they did not arrive at all. "It was the Devil." Soon the old man got paralyzed. After a while he rose and went on. He said to himself, "Well, I think these are not people. I am going [to die] soon, he has taken my life away. That is the kind my father used to tell me about, and now I have seen it. I don't know whether these are dead people or what." The old man bled from the nose. He said, "Don't take my life away, leave me alone. I do not want to be like you. I want to live as long as I can." Soon he went to a spring, bathed, and recovered.

Sometimes [Dave has heard] Washo Indians would see tracks in the snow showing feet as long as a man's entire arm. They would get frightened and would not follow the tracks.

Once, Dave was staying alone in a house at Tahoe City on Lake Tahoe. He was dreaming about something and felt a heavy weight, like a hundred pounds, on him. He tried to remove his blanket, and finally he succeeded in getting into the open. Another Indian and his wife had a similar experience in the same house. Dave thinks it might be caused by the ghosts of white people who used to live there. He could not see anything, he merely had the sensation of being held down.

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Somewhere two Indians were sleeping in a room in some old house. It was a cold night. Soon they heard a knock at the door. They were awake, opened the door, but no one was to be seen. They went out and around the house, but saw nothing. Possibly dead people were doing it. Soon there was a noise inside of somebody walking around. They could not see anything. They warned other people against ever sleeping inside that house.

Two Indians were going up a mountain with bows and arrows to shoot woodchuck. They met half a dozen dead people who looked as though alive and were hunting with bow and arrow. They were cooking squirrels and other food, sat around their fire at once, and, because they were dead, would not answer the Indians' questions. They just ate the squirrels, but drank no water. When the Indians spoke, no one of the other group answered or looked at them. One of the Indians, who was old, said, "You dare not come over and talk to us; we belong on the mountains." Still there was no answer. The speaker returned to his companion and said, "Well, we can't do anything with them. They just eat the squirrels they kill." Both hunters were alarmed and quickly went away. It was dark on their return and they lost their way, not finding the trail at first. When they got home the next day, they said nothing.

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The Washo were too close to the Paviotso to escape contact with Wovoka's gospel, but reacted with individual differences to it. Jack, for example, was skeptical and contrasted the alien conception unfavorably with the old Washo belief that souls go south to join the Father of the Indians. The Paviotso say that after a while the souls return. "They dance and the souls come back." A recent (1926) Washo doctor, in the manner of Wovoka, alleged to have visited the dead, reporting he had seen plenty of Indians in the land of spirits, with green grass everywhere, also fire (?). The dead would say to him, "Well, what have you come here for? You have not died; go back. When a man or woman dies, he stays here. Do not come back any more." Jack has no faith in this; old-time doctors never reported visits to the dead. According to one informant, Wovoka prophesied a big storm but it did not come true, and his own Walker River people were going to kill him as a false prophet, so he stopped.

[P. 399, B]

764 this inevitability. It is less than surprising then that
[178] changes in attitudes and rituals surrounding death
among the Washo have changed very slowly. The only
[177] changes which appear to have developed in Washo death
customs are those imposed by direct intervention of
the whites or as unavoidable consequences of changes
in other aspects of the culture.

768 In the past, when a person died the house in which
he expired was abandoned by his family. Of course, if
[342] the death occurred in the spring or summer such aban-
[221] donment was simple; during these seasons the Washo
usually lived in simple brush shelters. A winter death
was a more serious matter; it was during this season
that the Washo lived in the gal'edaŋ'i--a structure
made to last through the winter and until the next
[342] winter, when it was reoccupied. Valley Washo often
made these winter houses of brush or tules. In the
foothills and mountains, bark slabs and tree limbs
were utilized. If an occupant died, this house must be
abandoned and was often burned down, and the immedi-
ate family moved to another campsite. Thus a family
which suffered no deaths during the winters might
spend several years in a single campground, whereas
a less fortunate family might have to move every
winter, or even oftener than that.

342 A few Washo began building simple rectangular
178 board and batten houses in the 1890's. Most of the
others continued to live in gal'edaŋ'i made of boards
and scrap, begged, stolen, or purchased from the lum-
ber mills which were quite numerous in the area at
[657] the beginning of the century. In the 1920's, when most
of the Washo moved into the "colonies" established for
them by the government, the native-style houses were
abandoned in favor of the wooden houses built by the
764 government. No longer permitted to move about the
768 country at will, and frankly unwilling to abandon the
178 more comfortable white-style houses, the Washo ad-
justed their death customs. The most common adjust-
[656] ment was to prepare for an impending death by shift-
ing seriously ill persons into an adjoining structure,
often a shack built in the native manner or a shed or
lean-to. This structure could be burned down without
loss when its inhabitant died.[1]

[775] The Washo viewed this destruction of a house occu-
pied by a dead person as simply preventing his spirit
from bothering the living.

764 Most Washo death customs display a conscious at-
[114] tempt to avoid association with the dead. Barrett re-
ports that cremation was practiced, and the bones
placed in a stream to prevent their desecration. How-
ever, this appears to have been only one of the dis-
posal customs and is not well remembered by Washo
living today. The burning or burying of the personal
possessions of the dead was common. Certain prized
possessions were interred with the body, which was
usually wrapped in a shroud of matting, deerskin, or
[illegible] and placed in a fissure or cave in the moun-
tains. Although there are a number of locations known
by both Indians and local whites as old burying grounds,
[177] all my informants agreed that in the "real old days"
there was no special cemetery and that these burial
spots have developed since the coming of the white
man. This may well have been as a result of direct
white interference with native funeral customs and an
insistence that Indians concentrate their burials. Some
of these sites have become traditional among the Washo.

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[1] The willingness of the Washo to move gravely ill persons to the hospital seems in part motivated by the wish to avoid a death in the house.

764 [P.378, B] When the husband of one
of my informants died,
768 following a twelve-year illness spent in a secondary
house, she went to visit a daughter living near Lake
178 Tahoe. When she returned to Dresslerville her two
sons had torn down the shed and disposed of all their
father's possessions. In deference to their mother's
rather modern views about funerals, nothing had been
placed in the casket.

768 While I was in Dresslerville an Indian of about
forty put the torch to the house in which his mother
and father had lived. The house had been unoccupied
since their deaths. While the house burned no effort
was made to extinguish the fire or to call the fire
department. A nearby rancher saw the fire and sum-
moned the fire department, but the Indians refused to
tell the firemen how the fire had started. The local
newspaper reported it had been burned to drive away
[776] evil spirits. This upset my informants, one of whom
[775] said that the sight of the house simply made the man
[821] sad. She elaborated that the Washo felt they were help-
ing God wipe out the tracks of a dead person. The
Washo claim that after a death there is always a rain
or sand storm which wipes out the tracks of the de-
ceased.

764 After the Washo return home from a funeral, they
515 immediately wash their faces and hands. They would
783 not feel safe in handling food or children until this
ritual had been carried out.

The behavior of the dead is a matter of concern
775 for most Washo (2804-2809a). Ideally, the spirit is
supposed to go up and to the south where dead Indians
are. This land of the dead is guarded by a number of
men with bows. Some shamans were able to make the
[756] trip to the land of the dead (2541-2544). If they could
[787] elude these guards, they were sometimes able to re-
cover the spirit of a recently dead person and return
it. If, however, the spirit has partaken of the water
of a spring immediately behind the guards, it can never
be recovered. The by-now-familiar uncle of my informa-
ant once visited the land of the dead and reported that
there were lots of Indians there playing games and
having a good time. If murder victims were present
they were with the celebrants, but the spirits of the
killers were segregated and were not having a good
time.

Ghosts, however, wander over the land. They are
generally malevolent. If they feel they have been badly
used in life, or are not properly honored after death,
[768] or have not been given the things they wanted when
[782] buried, they may wreak vengeance on the living. To pre-
[55] vent this, homes were abandoned, prayers were said, and
names of the dead were not used. In discussing a recent
murder, one of the most progressive of the Washo was
extremely reluctant to give the name of the victim, and,
when she finally did, she whispered it. One of the diffi-
culties encountered by government agents when pine-nut
[648] lands were allotted to the Washo was a refusal to name
[551] the ancestors on whom the allotment claim was based.

Ghosts are often said to come in the form of whirl-
winds or dust devils, and most Washo will avoid look-
[821] ing at a whirlwind. At night, a sudden puff of warm
air is thought to be a ghost passing nearby.

the house of either of their parents. When the couple had a few children of their own they might then set up a household separate from their parents.

Although not as important as the destruction of the goods of the deceased, gifts were given by the mourners to the deceased. There is an indication in the notes of Dangberg (n.d., 6) that the gifts were laid upon the corpse and buried with it. The gifts were offered to the spirit of the deceased to make it content to stay away.

Feasts

The feast was characterized by the distribution of an abundance of food and the announcement that anyone who comes will be fed. There was often dancing, games, and gambling at these events. Sponsorship was of three kinds: kinship group, task group, and communal.

The kinship-group sponsored feasts were connected with births and puberty ceremonies. The feast following a birth was a small affair and only close friends and relatives attended. The puberty ceremony feasts were attended by a large number of people. They were publicized by four fires built up the side of a hill the night of the feast. With only three days of notice, from the onset of the girl's menstruation to the evening of the feast, the gathering and preparation of foods had to be done quickly by the girl's family and relatives. Today this, more than any other event, unites kinsmen into a hard working, well organized, social group. These feasts involved gift and ceremonial exchange.

A second type of feast was sponsored by a task group. A particularly successful hunting, fishing, or gathering trip was often followed by a feast. These feasts involved task group sharing.

A third type of feast was sponsored communally. Feasts that preceded the fall pinenut harvesting (tagum gumsabay?) were of this type. At these times fish and large game would be prepared communally and distributed according to the size of the family. These feasts involved familial sharing and are analogous to the "potluck diner" in our own culture.

Ceremonial Disposal

Ceremonial disposal includes a number of diverse practices among the Washo. The Washo threw a pinch of pinenut meal on the ground before each meal as a ritual propitiation of nature. They offered some food with prayers to nature at the spring and fall dances and when the first samples of each kind of plant food was gathered. These were essentially first-fruit rites.

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funeral speech, the destruction of property, and the abandonment of the house are all connected with a belief in ghosts who can cause sickness for their living relatives. Property is the "road" by which the ghost can return from the land of the dead. Its destruction prevents the return of the ghost (Freed and Freed, 1963). Houses are not destroyed for they are too valuable, but they are abandoned for a time and purified by smoking with sagebrush before reoccupancy. We did not observe any hair cutting for funerals. Holbrook says that the first thing people must do on returning to their homes from a funeral is to wash their faces. Thus it is doubtful if the year's prohibition on washing the face is still maintained, but we have no testimony on this point with regard to mourners. The name of the dead is permanently taboo, as it was formerly. The modern Washo funeral often takes place immediately after a Baptist service held by a white missionary in the Dresslerville church.

The Shaman's Curing Rite

The Shaman's curing rite is described in some detail in Freed and Freed (1963) and so only a summary will be given here. The shaman cured diseases by means of supernatural power. If the disease was caused by a ghost, the shaman identified the ghost and the property it had traveled on. He then told the patient either to get rid of the property or to treat it properly. If the disease was due to the intrusion of a foreign body into the victim either through sorcery or because the victim had mistreated food such as pinenuts, the shaman sucked out the object causing the disease. The shaman used a variety of implements in his curing, some of which represented the sources of his power. A tubular bone pipe, tobacco, and a cocoon rattle were used by all shamans. The eagle feather was frequently used, for the eagle was a potent source of power for many shamans.

The curing ceremony was held each night for four nights in the home of the patient before a crowd of spectators. The shaman prayed to his power, sang songs received from it, smoked and blew smoke on the patient, shook his rattle and walked about. He alternated these activities until about midnight on the first three nights of the ceremony and continued until dawn on the fourth night. On the morning after the fourth night everyone took a bath to conclude the ceremony. At some time during the ceremony the shaman had a vision that told him whether or not the cure would be successful.

The modern curing rite is apparently similar in all its essentials to the aboriginal one. Minor changes have occurred. Cigarettes are used instead of a tubular stone pipe; the ceremony is sometimes shortened to two nights; and the shaman no longer goes into a trance, vomits out the disease object, paints the patient, or brushes away the disease as reported by Stewart (1941, 413-14).

A CONFIGURATION OF ABORIGINAL WASHO CULTURE[1/4]

by Stanley A. and Ruth S. Freed

Beliefs in supernatural power (wegelfyu) and in ghosts are two elements that occur in several patterns of aboriginal Washo culture. These two beliefs are prominent in culture patterns concerned with the etiology and cure of diseases; they also occur in war, social control, funerals, child rearing and hunting. Ghosts and supernatural power are usually associated with the psychological condition of fear. Because these culture elements are widely distributed among the patterns of Washo culture, they function as a unifying or integrating force. Such relationships among culture patterns arising from the presence of common elements Nadel calls "logical consistency" (Nadel, 1951, 238-60).

If a cultural configuration is defined as a statement of a cultural regularity, usually with accompanying psychological states taken into account, which serves to integrate many of the culture patterns of a society, then fear of supernatural power and ghosts is a configuration of Washo culture. Because the individual Washo can manipulate power, and to some extent ghosts, for either good or evil, the fear of supernatural power and ghosts is often a fear of people who are known to have, or suspected of having, power; therefore, the configuration, fear of supernatural power and ghosts, is often equivalent to a fear of people.

This paper will describe the characteristics of supernatural power and ghosts in Washo culture; it will analyse the functions of these two elements in all culture patterns where they occur, thereby showing that they give logical consistency to Washo culture; and it will indicate how recognition of the configuration, fear of supernatural power and ghosts, helps to explain features of Washo behavior the reasons for which are not otherwise easily perceived.

The Washo culture here described is a reconstruction of aboriginal conditions. It is based primarily upon the statements of elderly people whom we consider reliable informants. Their testimony is usually internally consistent; they generally agree with each other, and their descriptions of Washo culture patterns closely resemble those of neighboring tribes which are also thought to be aboriginal (see especially Park, 1938, and Whiting, 1950). Bertha Holbrook and Henry Rupert claim to have been born in 1885 and Hank Pete in 1882. Nancy Emm did not give her age but looked as old as Holbrook. Mooney (1928, 20) considers 1845 to mark the end of the aboriginal period in the region. This means that when Emm, Holbrook, Rupert, and Pete were children, some Washo who were still living were familiar with the relatively undisturbed Washo culture.

1/ [footnote appears on p. 54 -- Analyst]

753 Ghosts are the second of the two culture elements associated with the
775 fear configuration. When a person dies, his spirit goes east under the sun. However, the spirit of the dead person may not always depart, but may remain in the vicinity to cause sickness for a living relative. The ghost "travels" on some bit of his property that was not destroyed at the funeral but remained in the possession of a relative. In the seven cases and one general statement we have recorded of illness caused by ghosts, the ghost has been a relative of his victim.

753 All the encounters with ghosts reported by informants were in dreams.
775 Sometimes the ghosts were seen, but more often they seemed to exert their
787 influence without showing themselves to the victim. Of the seven cases of illness caused by ghosts, one of the victims saw the ghost in a dream, two others apparently did not, and there is no information for the other four. However, if a ghost is involved in illness, it will be identified by the shaman in the curing ceremony.

Lowie recorded several examples of people seeing ghosts while awake. One man once heard some Paviotso singing and dancing. He saw some women sitting on the ground, not dancing. He spoke to them; they did not answer. He spoke to the owner of a horse standing nearby, and again received no answer. Then everyone vanished. The Washo was frightened and went to an Indian house. Another man saw two Indians approaching him. He sat down under a tree and waited for them to reach him, but they never did. "It was the [785] Devil....I don't know whether these are dead people or what." He became ill but went to a spring, bathed, and recovered. In a third case, two Indians met half a dozen dead people who seemed to be alive. They spoke to these beings but received no answer. The ghosts sat around a fire cooking squirrels; but because they were dead, they neither spoke nor drank water. The Washo became alarmed and went away (Lowie, 1939, 322-3). Particularly noteworthy in these accounts is the fact that people saw ghosts who were not relatives and in one case the man became ill because of it.

775 Whirlwinds are thought to contain ghosts (Stewart, 1941, 415; Lowie,
[92] 1939, 322). Holbrook says that when a gust of hot air hits someone, people
[551] say a dead person has passed by. Lowie (1939, 322) reports that a dead person's name should not be uttered. "Whoever broke this rule was rebuked as follows: 'He is dead, he is gone, don't call him!'"

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Beliefs about the causes of disease and curing methods depend to a great extent on supernatural power and ghosts. Soul loss, an encounter with a ghost, and sorcery are three causes of illness involving the supernatural. The first is apparently rare: the taking of the boy's soul by the water-baby in the Welukúshkush story recounted above is the only case we have recorded. Encounters with ghosts are more common. Our informants reported seven such encounters and made one general statement about this cause of sickness. The ghost causes illness, says Rupert, by "drying up the person's blood." It is possible, however, that ghosts kill by stealing a person's soul, for our informants often speak of the desire of the ghost to "take the relative back with him." However, no informant declared specifically that ghosts capture souls.

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Diseases caused by sorcery are also common. Our informants reported three cases and made four general statements about this source of disease. All the statements and two of the three cases indicate that sorcery involves nonrelatives, but in the case of diseases caused by ghosts the ghost and his victim are usually related. Sorcerers are persons with supernatural power who cause illness by magically shooting some object into their victim. They accomplish this simply by thinking about the person they wish to make ill or else by blowing their breath in his direction. Lowie's various accounts of sorcerers casting their spells differ from the statements of our informants. Lowie describes one sorcerer as spitting into his right palm and clenching his fist. Then he opens his fist, the thumb separated from the fingers (Lowie, 1939, 319). On another occasion, "The sorcerer merely took a bath in the cool of the early morning on four successive days and talked to himself. When ready, he would get within possibly five hundred yards of his victim. Then he would rub some stuff into the palm of his hand till it became invisible. He also took some fine sand and stepped on it with his left foot. His victim would fall sick, and within two days the heart would be knocked out of him without anyone's suspecting the cause, so that he would die.... Some doctors used a different procedure, picking up dust and scattering it toward their enemy with their hands" (Lowie, 1939, 320).

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Some diseases have no supernatural cause and may be treated by anyone with one of the large number of vegetable medicines known to the Washo. However, some of the best of these medicines are gathered by shamans who, in dreams, learn where they grow. The shaman may then sell these medicines or give them away.

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Shamans cure supernaturally caused diseases by means of their powers. The shaman uses a set of implements (wegelέyu) in curing ceremonies. Each shaman dreams of his implements, and these therefore differ slightly among shamans.

When a ghost is the cause of the disease, the shaman has a vision in which he identifies the ghost and the property upon which it had traveled. The shaman then advises the patient to get rid of this property; or, if the patient wants to keep it, he makes an additional payment to the shaman who then gives instructions that, if followed, permit him to retain the property without getting sick. Rupert usually instructs the patient to give water to the property. Sometimes the ghost gives the patient orders. When the shaman discovers this, he advises the patient to follow the orders of the ghost. Rupert relates how one ghost told her niece to bathe in a hot spring. The niece failed to do so and became ill. Rupert treated another case in which a ghost traveled on a winnowing basket and some eagle feathers and made a granddaughter ill. Rupert told the girl to give water to these things. She did and recovered.

Two causes of disease affect only shamans. One is illness resulting from power that has come to an individual who cannot control it. Such a person either learns to control the power or else has a shaman cure him by sucking out the power during a regular curing ceremony. The source of the second illness is the loss or destruction of the shaman's curing implements. If they are lost, another shaman may be able to locate them by having a vision in the course of a curing ceremony. If the implements are permanently lost, new implements may apparently be substituted. This conclusion is based on a single case in which Rupert claims to have cured a sick woman by informing her that two small children had lost her implements and that she must replace them. The destruction of a shaman's implements results in his death, according to our informants.

Warfare was a second culture pattern in which supernatural power played a prominent part. Shamans accompanied all war parties and served two functions: since they were often specialists in herbal medicine, they treated the wounded, and they called upon their supernatural powers to keep the enemy and his dogs asleep during the assault. The Washo attacked at night, hoping to surprise the enemy, and the shaman selected the night.

Shamans who had the power to control the weather sometimes aided in warfare. A story widely known among the Washo tells of a battle with the neighboring Maidu near Honey Lake in California. A leader gathered a band of warriors and two powerful shamans who possessed storm wegeléyu. The shamans summoned a north wind mixed with hail and the enemy froze to death. Lowie reports a similar version of this story (1930, 321).

Before a war party set out contests between shamans were held because the warriors wanted the shamans with the strongest powers to accompany them. Hank Pete says that the shamans filled their pipes and began to think about each other. They then exchanged pipes and began to smoke. After a

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756 few puffs the weaker shaman would start to choke and would fall unconscious, perhaps with blood running from his nose. After a time the stronger shaman would call the weaker one's name and revive him; or, if this failed, the stronger one would sing the weaker shaman's wegeléyu song and shake his rattle over him. If, after three repetitions of the song, the weaker shaman was still unconscious, the stronger would blow water from his mouth onto the other's forehead. This apparently was always effective. Although Pete did not explicitly say so, the mechanism involved in this kind of shamanistic contest may involve the loss and return of the soul. The unconscious state and the bleeding nose are similar to the symptoms of the boy in the Welukúshkush story; the two curing ceremonies have a common element in the calling of the unconscious person's name. Paralysis or unconsciousness and a bleeding nose are reported by Lowie in cases that probably involve soul loss (1939, 322-3).

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756 Contests among shamans were held regularly and not always as part
789 of the war pattern. Possibly they were a means by which shamans publicized their powers. Rupert reports that shamans were able to walk on hot coals and climb steep cliffs where there were no handholds. Rupert says a friend of his
[754] saw a shaman dance in fire and then vanish. According to Rupert, shamans
[755] also competed by magically shooting objects into one another. If a shaman failed to remove an object shot into him by another, it was understood that he was the weaker of the two. The stronger shaman would then remove the object, for contests among shamans were never a killing matter.

626 Both the threat of sorcery and the fear of an accusation of sorcery
754 were important patterns of social control among the Washo. These patterns usually operated among nonrelatives. Anyone could hire a sorcerer to cast a spell on an enemy; therefore, an individual would try to avoid trouble with others, even with those who were not particularly formidable, for anyone
626 could enlist aid. The activities of sorcerers were held in check because sor-
683 cerers were sometimes killed by angry relatives of the victim. If a sorcerer
754 became particularly troublesome, the Washo might reach a kind of general agreement that he should be killed. According to Pete, even the relatives of the sorcerer might agree that this was necessary. The killing was sometimes by stoning and sometimes by other methods. The people who killed a
[775] sorcerer were not in danger from his ghost because ghosts bother only relatives. Rupert says he never heard of the ghost of a murdered man returning to trouble the murderer. Lowie's discussion of the measures taken to control sorcery (1939, 319-20) agrees with the statements of our informants.

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778 Witches as well as sorcerers exist among the Washo. A sorcerer has
838 active control over his wegeléyu, whereas a witch is an old person whose generalized power (not wegeléyu) has become fairly strong with age. Sorcerers

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988 were active workers of malevolence; witches were hapless victims of a condition arising naturally from their age. However, this situation was obscured by the fact that older people were thought to be likely candidates for acquiring wegeléyu. Older people, therefore, were open to charges of sorcery; although innocent, an old person might be on the defensive knowing that he could inadvertently bewitch someone, especially a child or a young person. The belief that older people are more likely to acquire wegeléyu than younger ones is not supported by the testimony of our informants regarding the ages at which known shamans acquired power. Hank Pete's mother acquired her power before marriage, probably before the age of 15; Rupert acquired his as a young man.

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775 Social control among relatives was based on a fear of ghosts rather than sorcery. Relatives who could not be influenced in any other way could be reached by an attempted suicide. The reason is clear: the dead person could become a ghost; hence he would be in a position to threaten the life of his living relatives. The usual method for an attempted suicide was to eat wild parsnip. The poison acts slowly and gives plenty of time to save the victim. The Washo force an emetic down the person's throat and he vomits up the poison.

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[837] The four examples of attempted suicide recounted by our informants were definite attempts at resolving family problems. In one case, a man had been having difficulty with his wife; she was interested in another man. The husband ate wild parsnip, but was saved. As a result his sons brought pressure on the wife and made her behave. The couple stayed together until the husband died. A second case involved trouble between a brother and sister.
[593] The sister had been taking money from the parents, and the brother objected. The girl threatened suicide and the boy said, "Go ahead -- I don't care." The girl took wild parsnip, but not enough to kill her, and she was saved. The parents were very happy to have her revived. After this episode, the son left
[461] home. In the third case a man never wanted to work, and his mother and sister didn't like it. He attempted suicide by hanging, but the rope was too long and his feet touched the floor. A relative cut him down. The suicide attempt frightened his mother and sister and they stopped complaining. The fourth case concerned a woman. Our informant didn't know the reason for her attempt to kill herself, but commented, "It's always family trouble."

762 Our informants described four cases of successful suicide. Of these, three had no connection with social control. One was that of a helpless old man who lived alone and had no relatives. On a return trip from California where the Washo had been gathering acorns, he asked to be abandoned. Another successful suicide was a woman who had lost a daughter whom she loved very much. She ate wild parsnip and died in three hours. The third case, which is probably apocryphal, concerns a shaman who tried unsuccessfully to

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768 A fourth culture pattern in which ghosts play a part is the disposal of the dead. Two features of funerals are connected with the fear of ghosts. First, all the property of the dead person is destroyed and his house is torn down and the parts scattered. Second, at the time the body is cremated or buried an old man steps forward and makes a long speech in which he tells the ghost of the dead person to stay away and not bother the living. With modifications the Washo observe these customs today. Houses are no longer destroyed after a death for they are too valuable, but they are temporarily abandoned. Before the house is re-occupied it is smoked with sagebrush or juniper. Cremation is not practiced; the modern Washo bury their dead.

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888 Some features of child-rearing patterns are related to supernatural
754 power and the fear of ghosts. The fact that the aged may inadvertently bewitch people affects their relations with children. Mothers try to keep their babies out of the sight of old people who are unrelated. Pete says that to give food to a child was especially dangerous. Small children lived in the house next to Hank Pete and his wife; these children were Pete's sister's daughter's son's children, but they were not related to Pete's wife. Pete's wife never gave them anything to eat. Even older relatives could be dangerous unintentionally. Pete said they would pray to water not to make their relatives of the third descending generation sick when they gave them something to eat. Bertha Holbrook's daughter who lived with her had several young children. We spent many afternoons in Holbrook's house, but never saw any unrelated children playing with the Holbrook children. Bertha remarked that the Washo don't like to have their children going to other houses to play. She said that if her grandchildren do go to other houses, she likes to go with them to make them behave. Although she never spoke of the fear of old people as a factor in children's visiting patterns, we think that this fear may be the reason children play chiefly with relatives.

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775 Another feature of Washo child rearing is that parents seldom physically punish their children. Hank Pete explains that if a person beat his child a dead relative of the child, through the other parent, might become angry and kill the child. Then the child would become a ghost and kill his parent. Pete told a story of a family fight in which a man treated his son very roughly. The son took sick and a shaman diagnosed the trouble as being caused by the anger of the boy's dead relatives. The boy died; then the man sickened and he too died because the ghost of the child killed him. No other Washo ever volunteered this explanation. However, we once asked Rupert if he had ever handled a case like this. He said he had not, but that he had heard of such cases from older people and he confirmed Pete's explanation.

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778 Hunting is another culture pattern in which supernatural power is involved. Such power is used only in deer and antelope hunting. One use in

One use in

deer hunting involves the purification of an unlucky deer hunter. According to Pete, the shaman prays four days, after which the hunter gives away the first deer he kills. A second use of power in deer hunting is to locate a medicine called mugálu which, when properly used, puts the deer to sleep. Pete says that only shamans dream of this root. They wash and pray before collecting it; afterwards they give pieces of it to friends and relatives. The hunter puts a small piece of the root in a fresh deer track and begins to trail the deer. When he catches up to the deer, he finds it sleeping.

A shaman leads the communal antelope hunt. He sees the antelope in his dreams and talks to them. He sends boys to see if a herd has appeared as seen in his dream. When a herd has been sighted the Washo build a corral of sagebrush with a long chute leading into it. The shaman smokes his pipe and charms the antelope into the enclosure aided by a slow drive on the part of the other Indians. Once the animals are inside the corral the Washo close the entrance and kill the animals (Lowie, 1939, 324-5).

III

This paper has discussed the characteristics of supernatural power and ghosts among the aboriginal Washo. These elements occur in a number of culture patterns and therefore perform an integrating function in that they give Washo culture a degree of logical consistency. The recognition of the fear configuration helps to explain some features of Washo behavior in which the rationale is not readily apparent. The formation of children's play groups, the reported infrequency of physical punishment for children, and the correlation of attempted suicide and troubles within the family are examples. A statement by Hank Pete indicates that fear of old people may have been one factor in determining household composition. In a discussion of household composition during the fishing season at Lake Tahoe, Pete remarked that the fear of old people was a limiting factor in the number of people who would live together in one windbreak. It would be difficult to test this statement today, but a brief survey of the attitudes of younger parents toward having old people in the same household would indicate both the present-day strength of the fear configuration and the possibility that this configuration was a factor in indigenous household patterns.

Among the modern Washo, the fear configuration is almost certainly less prominent than it was in aboriginal times because the elements upon which it was based are disappearing (Merriam and d'Azevedo, 1957, 617). However, this configuration may still be useful in explaining some of the

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Mourning took place around the grave. Both male and female relatives cut their hair short and buried the hair clippings. Ashes were smeared on the mourners' heads. All mourners would abstain from washing until the [515] mourning was over and then would take a bath. The people cried, wailed, and spoke to the deceased saying "You are dead now. I'll never see you again. My wife [or other appropriate term of address], I don't want to see you any more. We can't talk like we used to. Don't make any noise outside our house. You live under the ground. We don't want to see you any more."

[775]

It is reported that if you did not appear sorry the spirit would come and take you or another relative away with him. The mourning ceremony might last up to four days. After that most of the people attending would wash and be finished. But the wife or husband of the deceased is reported to have remained in mourning for a considerably longer time, perhaps a year or more. [551] There was a permanent taboo against speaking the name of the deceased in front of the deceased's close relatives.

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Hank Pete said that one way to get a deceased person out of your mind and to stop hearing his voice was to hang a pendant of manzanita berries from the lobe of the ear. The berries were tied with sinew through a hole made in the lobe.

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Susie Dick told Dangberg (1919, 5-6) of the following funeral.

"Susie's niece died Thursday, August 7th. On Friday Susie went to the funeral. . . . This dead woman's grandfather was a doctor. He kept trying to give her a dream, but she would not believe it and died as a result.

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[761]

"Her funeral will be conducted in this way. The people will all gather about the corpse. The relatives will wail. Those of the spectators who do not join in this will be forced to do so by the relatives.

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"A doctor will address them and when they grow tired standing he will permit them to sit down. Everyone present will go touch the corpse and repeat in so doing a short exhortation to the spirit: 'Go away,' 'Do not bother us,' etc. At this time each person will lay a handkerchief, a piece of money, etc., upon the corpse an an offering to the spirit to make it content to stay away. Finally the people will take the corpse to the burial ground and bury it. Susie said, 'There is such a ground near Woodfords. One can hear the dead Indians singing and speaking there.'

[782]

NR13 Northern Paiute NR13
Washo, NT20
Achomawi NS5

CULTURE ELEM. DISTRIB.: XIV—STEWART: NORTHERN PAIUTE

	Ys	Ki	Kl	Ku	Yo	Yo	Pa	Wa	At	Sa	Yg	Wi	Ki	AV	
2579. To spirit (sunyipo)	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	NWA
2580. To night	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	776
2581. Offerings of: food	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	782
2581a. At spring dance	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	
2582. Game	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	
2583. Seeds	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	
2584. Tobacco	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+	
2585. Shell beads	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2586. Offerings: at meals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2589. When hunting	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
2590. When 1st seeds gathered	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Guardian Spirits															NWA
2591. Source: childhood dreams	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	787
2592. Adult dreams	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
2592. Various powers received from spirits	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Shamanistic Curing															NWA
2594. Special herb doctors	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	757
2595. Blood-letting	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	
2596. Sweating	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Destiny of Soul															
2597. Spirit goes above, to sky	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	
2598. Spirit travels south and up	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	
2599. Spirit goes along Milky Way (kwaipo)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	
Ghosts or Souls (tsaava or nagwa)															NW
2600. Ghost leaves body: at death	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	775
2601. Shortly before death	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	763
2602. Ghost visible: to anyone	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2602a. To doctor only	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2603. Ghost audible	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2604. Ghost feared	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2605. Ghost in whirlwind (pitumawa)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2606. Dreaming of dead is ill omen	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2607. Cold bath to nullify	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	NWA
2608. Prayer to nullify	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	
2609. Smoke blown to nullify	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	787
2609a. Specularite (yadupi) sprinkled to nullify	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	
"Kwaipo" (possibly Supernatural)															N
2613. Properties and name known	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	276
DANCES															NWA
2614. Circle Dance (nagwa)	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	535
2615. Brush corral	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	
2616. Performances: at fall rabbit hunt	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
2617. At fall pinon-nut harvest	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	
2618. In spring	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	
2619. In summer	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	
2620. Purpose: mainly pleasure	-	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	N
2621. To make seeds grow	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	[787]

[p. 415]